

By: Minjarez

H.B. No. 45

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to creating a mentor program for foster youth.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 264, Family Code, is amended by adding Section 264.1214 to read as follows:

Sec. 264.1214. FOSTER YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAM. (a) The department shall work with community-based organizations to establish a mentor program to serve foster youth age 14 or older.

The mentor program must:

(1) match foster youth in a one-on-one mentor relationship with an adult volunteer;

(2) focus on building healthy peer networks, increasing self-confidence, and improving optimism about the future; and

(3) assist foster youth in developing life skills in conjunction with the experiential life-skills training program.

(b) The department shall:

(1) recruit volunteers, including former foster youth, to serve as mentors; and

(2) require volunteer mentors to serve at least eight hours each month for at least one year.

(c) A person who volunteers as a mentor is subject to state and national criminal background checks in accordance with Sections 411.087 and 411.114, Government Code.

1 (d) The department shall provide annual evidence-based
2 intervention training for all volunteers.

3 (e) The commissioner may adopt rules to implement this
4 section.

5 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.